

Let Erie County borrow

As your county executive, my top job and priority is to make decisions that are in the best long-term interest of this community. That is why I look ahead 50 years from now when making decisions. For too long, leaders in this community have been concerned about the short term. As a result, our county's future is at risk because we have accepted band-aid fixes instead of real solutions.

Making decisions with a 50-year view is why I will not allow the Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority (Control Board) to borrow money (sell bonds) on behalf of Erie County.

For years, Erie County leaders went to Wall Street to borrow money to pay for infrastructure improvements and other necessary projects throughout our county. Since the Erie County Fiscal Stability Authority became 'hard', the county has been unable to borrow without the authority's permission. Against the wishes of local elected officials, the authority refuses to let Erie County borrow and has insisted that it borrow on behalf of the county. Conversely, the authority cannot

borrow unless I ask them to do so.

Allowing the authority to borrow money for Erie County is not in the best long-term interest of this community and our hard-working taxpayers. If the authority borrows — even one time — it will then exist, in some form or fashion, for the life of the 30-year bond. This fact has been acknowledged by the authority's own lawyers. Why would this community want to saddle ourselves with the stigma of a Control Board for 30 years? Furthermore, the authority currently costs taxpayers \$600,000 a year in operational expenses.

Yet the authority insists it should borrow because it can save the county money. It is true that the authority does have a better credit rating than Erie County and can borrow at a lower rate. But are those savings worth it? According to Erie County's outside financial advisers, the authority will be able to save the county less than \$50,000 a year over the



CHRIS COLLINS

Erie County Executive

life of the 30-year bond. Saving \$50,000 a year does not outweigh the stigma of having a Control Board for three decades at the cost of several hundred thousands of dollars a year.

It is important to note that the City of Buffalo Control Board, faced with the same issue, unanimously voted last week to allow Buffalo to sell its own bonds on Wall Street.

This debate should not be about politics or personalities, but about the numbers. As you can clearly see, the numbers present a bad deal for county taxpayers, and it is a deal I refuse to accept. Sadly, this impasse

prevents needed capital projects from moving forward as our infrastructure continues to crumble. I hope the authority will do what is right for the taxpayers of this community and allow Erie County to borrow. This is the right decision for today and 50 years from today.



Heard

call: 632-0390

(Editor's note: Call The Bee at 632-0390 and record a one-minute comment on our Bee Heard line. It gives readers an opportunity to comment quickly and candidly on items of local or regional interest. Callers do not have to identify themselves and no callers' names will be used. In the interest of fairness and good taste, The Bee will not publish derogatory or insulting comments. All comments are by our readers and are subject to editing.)

✓In the April 23 issue, "Out of the Past" stated 75 years ago there were 18 school districts in the Town of Amherst. Somewhere in the late 1940s and early 1950s, apparently these 18 became three. Why can't we here in the 21st century combine the three into one? It makes sense to me. (Editor's note: In several cases, a single schoolhouse was its own district during this time. The population of the Town of Amherst in 1930 was 16,300, according to the Amherst Museum. The population in 2006 was estimated at 116,770.)

✓To all the businesses and organizations who call our local pizza shops for large deliveries, do you realize these young drivers are working for minimum wage, using their own vehicles and paying for their own gas? So, when you place your \$100 food order to be delivered and give the driver a \$1 tip, it is insulting. They are providing you a service, and it costs them more than \$1 to pull out of the restaur-

ant's driveway. You should be ashamed of yourselves.

✓Why does The Amherst Bee permit Satish Mohan to use his column to explain all of his positions with regard to national issues? I believe that is wrong. If Mohan is going to have a regular column in The Bee, it should be a requirement that he discuss Amherst issues and only Amherst issues. I couldn't care less what he thinks about anything that is going on in Washington or any place other than Amherst.

✓I can't understand why the town board would want to insert another village into the already-existing town. Maybe we should be calling Amherst "Bendersonville," and we can also kiss goodbye our Safest City in America designation.

✓I love seeing the dogs at Amherst State Park. It is a beautiful park, and the park is big enough that if you don't want to be near the dogs, there are plenty of places to walk. Looking at the dogs brings me great joy.

✓The comment about Maple Road becoming like International Drive in Orlando was well taken. One major difference between Orlando and Amherst, which the caller failed to mention, is the folks who drive there have a destination in mind — Disney World. What tourist site do we have? Do the numerous "for lease" buildings put up by Benderson all over town constitute a tourist Mecca? Give me a break.

✓After looking at a wooden

horse and a construction cone for about one year, the town finally repaired the curbside storm drain. It looks good, however, after looking at the deep ruts on the grass area between the street and sidewalk for the past two months, I purchased 10 bags of topsoil for a total out-of-pocket cost of \$16.20. The one-man job — me — took one hour and 35 minutes. The job is complete and looks good.

✓What is wrong with the people of Amherst? Now you have a caller comparing International Drive and Disney World with the Maple Road project at the former shooting club. Let this project go forward. A couple of cafes, a restaurant and a small hotel does not even begin to compare with the approach to Disney World.

✓Anyone who has lived in Amherst for the past 25 years or so should know by now what the developer wants, the developer gets. Zoning changes are made to suit the developer, and resolutions and building codes are modified at the drop of a gavel. Our board members go through the motions, but in the end the developer wins. Residents are just an obstacle that eventually goes away with lip service from the developer-oriented board members. Shelley Schratz is just straddling the fence to save face.

✓Our town board members have had over a year to look at the Buffalo Shooting Club project and have postponed the rezoning vote more times than I can count. Everyone was told the vote would take place on May 5, but Shelley Schratz wanted to inconvenience everyone who came to the meeting and postponed the vote again. She said if she voted that night,

she would have to vote no, so why didn't she vote no? She had months to figure this out. Enough is enough.

✓At the most recent town board meeting, Benderson brought many of their employees who do not live in Amherst. Some of their employees came from Hamburg and Orchard Park. Meanwhile, Amherst taxpayers had to stand out in the hall so those nonresidents could fit in town chambers. This is wrong. If the room cannot hold everyone in attendance, Amherst taxpayers (who pay for the building and politicians' salaries) should have a priority at their local government meetings. If police have to request ID, so be it. If our elected officials won't allow taxpaying residents to have access to the meetings, then it's time to elect new representatives.

✓I have never seen such posturing as that done by Shelley Schratz at the May 5 town board meeting. She says she's 100 percent in favor of the Benderson project on Maple Road, but won't vote yes. Then she's concerned about asking Erie County to force landowners at Maple and North Forest to give up their land for this project, but won't vote no. Remember, this project is almost a mile away from North Forest and Maple. That's how big of an effect this project will have on our town. Either she's in support of millionaire developers (as Todd Benderson said, the big guys), or she supports small businesses and the right to keep your land. Being a small business owner herself, what doesn't she understand? No business or person should have their land taken away from them so

a developer can make millions.

✓Our town officials are not keeping all residents informed of their plan for the Maple Road corridor. A developer is attempting to turn the central part of town into his kingdom, and some members of our town board are aiding and abetting him. The entire length of North Forest is going to be negatively impacted. They will have to rebuild parts of it, even necessitating the use of eminent domain. None of this would be needed if town board members would vote no to general business zoning on the old shooting club property on June 2. They are about to destroy the Amherst suburb we moved here to enjoy, all to satisfy a developer's greed.

✓Amherst State Park is a jewel in our community. It is a sanctuary of peace and natural beauty; it holds forest, fields and flowing waters. In short, it is a slice of American pie. I love to walk my dog and meet and talk with people who are enjoying the beauty and peace. I carry a bag and clean up after my dog properly. I now carry more than one bag, because sometimes there is need and accidents happen. A few ago weeks I ventured into the woods to follow the path to the creek side. I came upon a fire pit, one of three sites with trash strewn all over. It had fresh-burnt ash from the night before. The romping dogs are clearly not the problem. As for the dog wardens, they do their jobs very well and are diligent town employees. So, dear neighbor, bring a trash bag and I'll join you to clean up after people who don't care about the impact of their actions, unlike we dog owners.

INTEGRITY

Our commitment to conduct ourselves with honesty and sincerity

RESPECT

Our commitment to treat you and your loved ones with Dignity, Compassion and Respect

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Our commitment to provide Service Beyond Expectation

ENDURING RELATIONSHIPS

Our commitment to fulfill your wishes before, during and after the service

Dengler & Roberts Funeral Home

8630 Transit Road ♦ East Amherst, New York 14051 ♦ 716-636-1111
2070 Eggert Road ♦ Amherst, New York 14226 ♦ 716-837-2070
3000 Delaware Avenue ♦ Kenmore, New York 14217 ♦ 716-873-7825

Perna-Pellegrino Funeral Home

1671 Maple Road ♦ Williamsville, New York 14221 ♦ 716-632-8200
1306 Hertel Avenue ♦ Buffalo, New York 14216 ♦ 716-874-1010

Danzer, Dengler & Roberts Funeral Home

5363 Genesee Street ♦ Bowmansville, New York 14026 ♦ 716-683-3810

Our Families have been serving the Western New York Community for generations.
www.denglerandrobertsfuneral.com

Increase Cash Flow!

There is a business specialist right here in WNY.

What is Cost Segregation?

Cost Segregation is the process of segregating the costs associated with the real and personal property investments in real estate.

Industries that Benefit:

- Medical Buildings
- Office Buildings
- Apartment Complexes
- Assisted Living Facilities
- Banks
- Auto Dealerships
- Other Investment Properties



5586 Main Street, Suite 1G
Williamsville

Get Started Today
Call Daniel J. Rogers, CPA
For a Free Analysis

716-630-0500
www.costsegregation.net